INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC TUNAS



COMMISSION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DES THONIDES DE L'ATLANTIQUE

COMISION INTERNACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACION DEL ATUN ATLANTICO

Madrid, 28 April 2022

ICCAT GBYP CIRCULAR # G-0428/2023

SUBJECT: CALL FOR TENDERS ICCAT GBYP 03/2023 – AERIAL SURVEY FOR THE MONITORING OF BLUEFIN TUNA SPAWNING AGGREGATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA (ICCAT

GBYP - PHASE 13)

I should like to transmit the Call for Tenders ICCAT 03/2023 - Aerial survey for the monitoring of bluefin tuna spawning aggregations in the Mediterranean Sea, under the Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP).

I would be grateful if you could distribute this Call for Tenders to qualified people and institutions that might be interested.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration

Executive Secretary



Camille Jean Pierre Manel

DISTRIBUTION:

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Attachment: Call for Tenders 03/2023, including area survey sampling design and budget.

Call For tenders ICCAT GBYP 03/2023

Aerial survey for the monitoring of bluefin tuna spawning aggregations in the Mediterranean Sea (ICCAT GBYP - Phase 13)

GBYP aerial surveys objectives and background

The main objectives of the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Bluefin Tuna Research Programme (GBYP) are to improve: (a) the understanding of key biological and ecological processes, (b) current assessment methodology, (c) the management procedures, and (d) advice.

Key tasks are to reduce uncertainty in stock assessment and to provide robust management advice. This requires improved knowledge of key biological processes and parameters. Currently almost all the data used in stock assessments are obtained from fisheries-dependent data, which can be affected by changes in exploitation patterns and TACs. It is therefore important to obtain data from alternative sources, such as fishery independent indices, in order to verify the assumptions made when conducting the assessments or to improve the current data sets used in OM or MSE.

Therefore, one of the major research tasks under the ICCAT Atlantic-Wide Research Programme for Bluefin Tuna (GBYP) has been the aerial survey for spawning aggregations (AS), which has already been carried since 2010 (all documents are available here), aiming to provide a fishery-independent index of relative abundance of spawning stock biomass.

The GBYP AS has faced numerous logistical challenges, which have resulted in changes in survey design and data processing to standardize methodologies and improve the accuracy of the index. Consequently, a new in-depth revision of the whole GBYP AS program was carried out in 2020 by two external experts (Vølstad, 2020 and Buckland, 2020) who detected some inconsistencies in the currently available AS index time series and presented several recommendations for its improvement, which were considered by the SCRS Bluefin Tuna Species Group. One of these recommendations was to start moving to digital observing and counting systems to substitute human observers-based system, and another was to extend, if possible, the surveyed areas. In addition, in 2021 a global reanalysis of the whole time series was carried out to further refine the database and generate an improved index time series based on fully standardized analytical procedures. In 2021, a pilot aerial survey was carried out in the Balearic Sea area, covering both the usual core area and an extended area around it, aiming at evaluating the feasibility of using digital systems for the monitoring of BFT spawning aggregations and its accuracy and precision, as compared to the classic human observers-based system.

Despite the positive preliminary results from the pilot survey due to logistic constraints and available budget, the GBYP Steering Committee (SC) decided to resume the aerial survey for bluefin tuna spawning aggregations in the core areas of the Western and Central Mediterranean Sea in 2023, following the classic human observers-based system. The three sub-areas to be surveyed were the following: Balearic Sea (Area A), Southern Tyrrhenian Sea (Area C) and Central-southern Mediterranean Sea (Area E).

To keep the time series of this aerial index, which is one of the indices used for the evaluation of the eastern BFT stock within the framework of the new management system based on the MSE approach, the GBYP SC has decided to develop new surveys in the same areas and following the same methodology as in the 2022 campaigns.

Consequently, this Call for Tenders is launched, for public or private entities, be they scientific institutions or interested companies, for the submission of proposals to carry out the full project, detailed below.

Funds are going to be made available under GBYP Phase 13, for covering the related costs, when the EU Grant for Phase 13 has been confirmed. Therefore, the signature of the contract(s) is contingent upon the availability of the funds.

Contractor tasks

The Contractor will work in close consultation with the ICCAT GBYP Coordinator and the GBYP Steering Committee and, if required by GBYP, on the advice of an expert nominated by GBYP, who could participate some days during the survey as an onboard scientific observer, substituting one of the scientific observers hired by the company. The Contractor will conduct aerial surveys in one or more sub-areas covering the spawning aggregations, identified in the attached maps, according to the sampling design attached (**Attachment 1**). The three sub-areas to be surveyed are the following: Balearic Sea (Area A), Southern Tyrrhenian Sea (Area C) and Central-southern Mediterranean Sea (Area E). The Contractor is responsible for obtaining the flight permits.

The Contractor will develop a pilot aerial survey targeting BFT spawning aggregations following classic visual observations and the sampling strategy defined in the attached files, where the coordinates of several series of replicas of transects are defined. The operational budget for these pilot campaigns is sufficient for several replicates according to the survey design. The objective is to get four replicates in each area, and unless "force majeure" reasons concur, the minimum number of complete replicates by area will be three.

The survey will be conducted in the period from the end of May to the beginning of July 2023. The spotting altitude will be 300 m. The distance covered in a one-hour flight should be about 100 nm, with about 6 onduty flight hours per day. It is reasonable to take into account adverse weather forecasts for 20% of the days (bad weather conditions mean winds over 3 on the Beaufort scale, or low clouds at less than 300 m altitude, or heavy rain, which prevent reliable observation of tuna schools close to the sea surface). It is mandatory to apply the aerial survey protocol.

The offer is to specify the following: (a) type of aircraft (adequate for aerial spotting, possibly with upper wings, two propellers and good forward visibility, mandatorily equipped with bubble windows, one on each side); (b) availability of a pilot and a professional tuna spotter; (c) availability of two scientific spotters, belonging to scientific institutions that are independent from the fishing industries; (d) survey time provided for each replica.

The Contractor will provide a full GPS recording of all flights and sighting positions, together with the necessary way points when relevant. All sightings will also be documented with photos, preferably using a high resolution, geo-stabilised, GPS tagging, electronic camera. All photos will be delivered along with the final report.

The Contractor will provide the sightings forms from visual observations to ICCAT GBYP, duly filled, at the end of each week (24 hours maximum after the last flight), in order to allow for real-time checks and corrections.

The awarded Contractor will ensure the participation of one official representative, the pilot(s), the professional spotter(s) and the scientific spotters in an online training course (1 day) to be held prior to the starting of field operations, possibly at short notice. Participation in the course is mandatory. The Contractor will provide photos and the personal details of all the staff working on the survey before the training course.

Contractor minimum qualifications

- Documented multi-year experience in bluefin tuna studies and/or aerial surveys or censuses of marine populations; previous experience in tuna aerial survey is preferred.
- Availability of an adequate aircraft for aerial spotting, including a technical description of the aircraft equipped with two bubble windows (one on each side) piloted by a licensed pilot having documented experience in this field.
- Availability of at least one professional tuna spotter, who has documented multiyear experience in this field.

- Availability of at least two scientific observers, preferably with previous experience in tuna fisheries or biology, aerial surveys and/or census of marine populations, and who pertain to scientific institutions or entities independent of the fishing industries and who hold a university degree in one of the following: Fisheries Science, or Marine Biology or Natural Sciences or Biological Sciences or Environmental Sciences or closely related fields.
- Excellent working knowledge of one of the three official languages of ICCAT (English, French and Spanish). A good command of English is highly desirable.
- Bank or Insurance guarantee for the amount of the contract, to be provided before signature of the contract.

Request for bids

Interested entities **should submit an offer only** to the ICCAT Executive Secretary (camille.manel@iccat.int), with copy to Ms. Ana Martinez (ana.martinez@iccat.int) by **12 May 2023**, including:

- a) A detailed offer, describing the sub area(s) where the aerial survey will be carried out, the type of spotting aircraft to be used for the survey, the minimum number of flight hours to be guaranteed in total, the maximum number of stand-by days, the date for the interim report and the date for the final report;
- b) The curricula of the pilot, the professional spotter and the scientific observers;
- c) The curriculum of the institution or company applying for the GBYP Pilot Aerial Survey 2023, with any documented experience in aerial survey or marine population survey, to include recent and relevant contracts for the same or similar items and other references (including contract numbers, points of contact with telephone numbers and other relevant information);
- d) A detailed estimated budget for the aerial survey, specifying the cost, including number of working days, to cover four replicates, according to the attached table (**Attachment 2**);
- e) The name, address, VAT/tax number and telephone number of the tendering body, along with the contact number of the person responsible for field activity;
- f) The institutional and administrative background of the tendering body (e.g. statutes, type of institution, annual budget, budget control procedures, etc.);
- g) If the aircraft proposed for the survey does not belong to the tendering body, then a declaration from its owner should be included, to define the availability of the aircraft for this duty and to ensure that the aircraft is properly insured for all risks by a primary insurance company; a copy of the subcontract or MOU should be also provided;
- h) A detailed list of any subcontracting activities. Subcontracts can be allowed up to a maximum of 40% of the budget;
- i) The declaration that the offering institution will strictly follow the aerial survey design and the protocol provided by ICCAT GBYP prior to the beginning of the surveys, along with the forms to be used for the survey, and the administrative rules specified in the contract;
- j) A declaration that all the comments eventually made on the draft final report will be incorporated in the final report;
- A completed copy of the operating license and authorization (if applicable) and any administrative document, released by the competent public authority, demonstrating that the offering institution is authorized to operate the aerial survey;

- l) A declaration that the offering institution will provide an insurance guarantee for the full amount of the contract, before its signature;
- m) A declaration that the offering institution will be covered by full insurance for the aerial survey to be carried out according to the Call for tenders, excluding ICCAT from all liability concerning the work to be carried out by each offering institution;
- n) Acknowledgment of this Call for tenders;
- o) A statement specifying the extent of agreement with all terms, conditions, and provisions herein included.

Offers that fail to furnish the required documentation or information or reject the terms and conditions of the Call for tenders may be excluded from consideration.

Contractors can be either research institutions such as government or private laboratories, universities, or private consultancy firms or other entities having the required qualifications.

The Contractor will be available to report to any meeting requested by ICCAT.

The Contractor will take onboard an expert scientific observer appointed by ICCAT GBYP at any time, at short notice.

The ICCAT Secretariat will make a selection of the offers and will decide the contract to be awarded. The awarded entity will be notified shortly afterwards.

Deliverables

- 1. The sighting forms concerning the first week of activities to be submitted by e-mail the day after the first week of operations, at the latest, with the GPS tracks (electronic) and brief notes on specific problems.
- 2. The sighting forms concerning the second week of activities to be submitted by e-mail the day after the second week of operations, at the latest, with the GPS tracks (electronic) and brief notes on specific problems.
- 3. The sighting forms concerning the third week of activities to be submitted by e-mail the day after the third week of operations, at the latest, with the GPS tracks (electronic) and brief notes on specific problems.
- 4. The sighting forms concerning the fourth week of activities to be submitted by e-mail the day after the fourth week of operations, at the latest, with the GPS tracks (electronic) and brief notes on specific problems.
- 5. The sighting forms concerning the fifth week of activities to be submitted by e-mail the day after the fifth week of operations, at the latest, with the GPS tracks (electronic) and brief notes on specific problems.
- 6. The draft final report to be submitted at the latest by **10 July 2023**, including:
 - a) Full description of the work carried out during the aerial survey;
 - b) Detailed description of the methodology;
 - c) Detailed maps of the areas in which the aerial survey was carried out, according to the aerial survey design;
 - d) Maps with the GPS tracks of the survey, by date;

- e) Detailed maps of the sightings, with GPS positions;
- f) Full copy of the official sighting forms, complete with full details;
- g) Complete copy of the photos and videos of visual observations taken during the survey (on appropriate digital storage medium), including their reference;
- h) Scientific report, prepared taking into account the aerial survey design and the relevant literature;
- i) Summary;
- j) A Power point presentation of the main results.
- 7. The definitive final report, to be prepared taking into account the eventual comments provided by ICCAT, and the full administrative report including copies of all administrative documents, to be submitted by **24 July 2023**, at the latest.

Payment details

Disbursements will be made according to the following schedule:

- 1. 40% of the total amount of the contract upon signing of the contract;
- 2. 40% upon providing Deliverable No. 5;
- 3. 20% after approval of the final report upon incorporation of comments made by ICCAT and approval of the administrative documents.

Logistics

All documents provided by the Contractor must be in MS Word or compatible software, tables must be in Excel format or compatible, figures and pictures must be in JPEG or TIFF format or compatible. All documents submitted must be in English, French or Spanish.

Copyright

All of the material produced by the Contractor will remain the property of ICCAT GBYP and must be kept confidential.

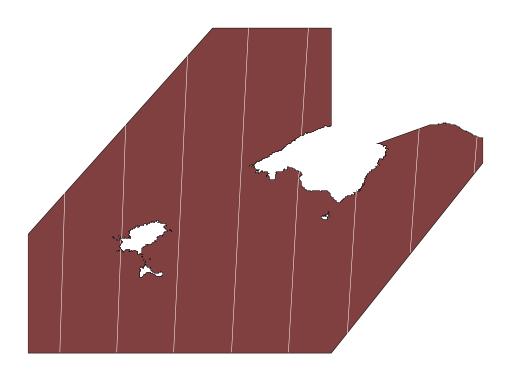
References

Buckland S.T. 2020. Independent peer review of the revision of GBYP aerial survey design, implementation and statistical analyses (ICCAT GBYP 12/2020) of the Atlantic-wide research programme for bluefin tuna (ICCAT GBYP Phase 10). Collect. Vol. Sci, Paps. ICCAT 77(2): 977-987.

Vølstad J.H. 2020. Review of the revision of GBYP aerial survey design, implementation and statistical analyses (ICCAT GBYP 12/2020) of the Atlantic-wide research programme for bluefin tuna (ICCAT GBYP Phase 10). Collect. Vol. Sci, Paps. ICCAT 77(2): 988-1005.

Area A - Balearic Sea

Replica 1



Sample layer name: Replica 1

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 8

List of samplers: x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

0.7072124 38.00261 0.7510964 39.35616

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Sampler 2

1.18965 38.00578

1.223444 38.8756

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1.225183 38.9196

1.226264 38.94691

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1.226866 38.96213

1.266103 39.93437

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Sampler 3

1.672063 38.00697

1.789901 40.51007

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Sampler 4

2.154405 38.00617 2.302854 40.73841

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Sampler 5

2.636629 38.0034

2.724313 39.47151

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2.724796 39.47936

2.727942 39.53037

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2.746509 39.82922

2.804463 40.73818

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Sampler 6

3.129596 38.16723

3.208869 39.35724

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3.209051 39.35991

3.209705 39.36948

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Sampler 7

3.662232 38.84454

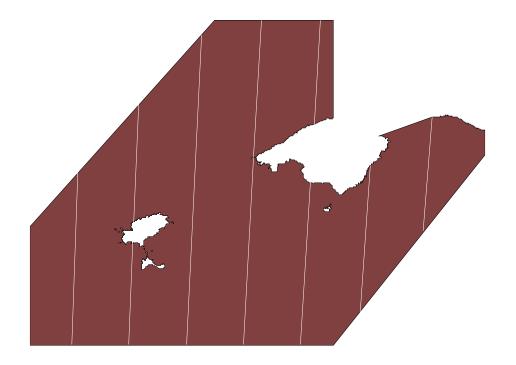
3.741367 39.89382

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Sampler 8

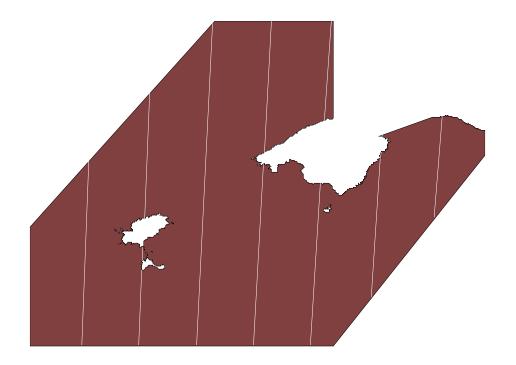
4.20538 39.5188

4.230945 39.82466



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Sample layer name: Replica 2
Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 7
List of samplers:
   x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
    0.7922808 38.00331
    0.8412835 39.45829
  Sampler 2
1.274717 38.00613
    1.309005 38.8628
    1.316279 39.04103
    1.357818 40.03607
  Sampler 3
    1.757122 38.00697
    1.883199 40.61131
  Sampler 4
    2.239446 38.00583
2.324733 39.57843
    2.325262 39.58787
    2.391311 40.73853
  Sampler 5
    2.721644 38.0027
2.804898 39.37204
    2.835907 39.86251
    2.892899 40.73792
```

Sampler 6
3.222773 38.28687
3.306228 39.51025
-Sampler 7
3.757229 38.96366
3.831179 39.92511



```
Sample layer name: Replica 3 Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 7
List of samplers:
   x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
    0.8773497 38.00396
    0.9317359 39.56035
  Sampler 2
    1.359784 38.00642
    1.385616 38.63603
    1.387722 38.68669
    1.388023 38.69394
    1.389094 38.71967
1.393867 38.83401
    1.403894 39.07259
    1.449807 40.13769
  Sampler 3
    1.842178 38.00691
    1.976782 40.71246
  Sampler 4
    2.324483 38.00542
    2.409145 39.53399
    2.414587 39.62902
    2.479765 40.73858
  Sampler 5
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2.806654 38.00195

2.89149 39.37038

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2.925738 39.9011

2.98133 40.73758

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Sampler 6

3.316265 38.40643

3.397959 39.57832

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3.398578 39.58698

3.401831 39.63242

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3.411213 39.76297

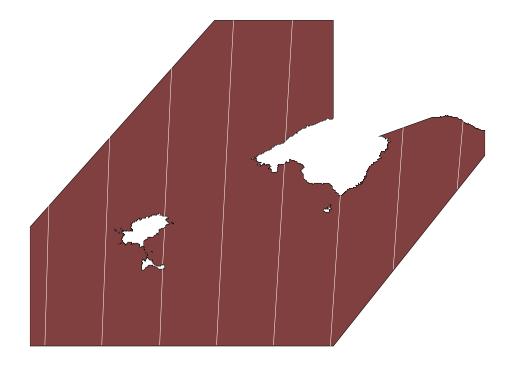
3.412319 39.77832

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Sampler 7

3.852556 39.08268

3.918839 39.92843
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Sample layer name: Replica 4 Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 8
List of samplers:
   x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
    0.5650522 38.0013
    0.6009678 39.18531
  Sampler 2
    1.047488 38.00505
    1.113444 39.76424
  Sampler 3
    1.529913 38.00682
    1.557605 38.64508
    1.559325 38.6842
    1.57278 38.98827
    1.577543 39.09503
    1.634618 40.34069
    --
  Sampler 4
    2.012281 38.00661
    2.155023 40.73807
  Sampler 5 2.494545 38.00442
    2.582864 39.53265
    2.594508 39.72706
    2.656663 40.73848
```

Sampler 6
2.976656 38.00025
3.058035 39.26683
-Sampler 7
3.504205 38.64526
3.59145 39.84137
-Sampler 8
4.044209 39.32044
4.090824 39.89424

Area C – Southern Tyrrhenian Sea

Replica 1



Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 1

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 6

List of samplers: x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

15.56295 38.29397 15.74683 39.92273

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Sampler 2

15.07043 38.13248 15.26668 39.99473

--

Sampler 3

14.58809 38.06188 14.77776 39.9972

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Sampler 4

14.1092 38.02568

14.28837 39.99945

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Sampler 5

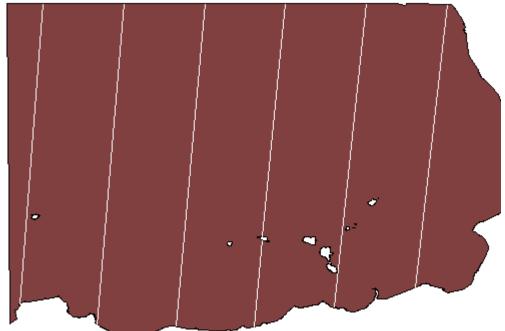
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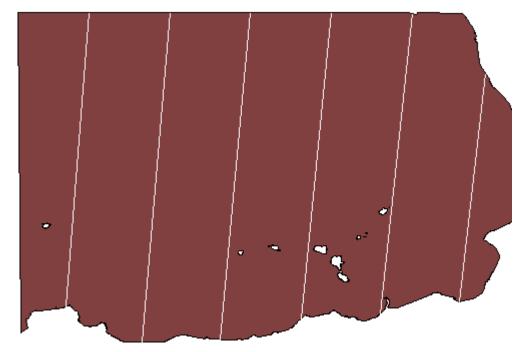
Sampler 6

13.16872 38.19486

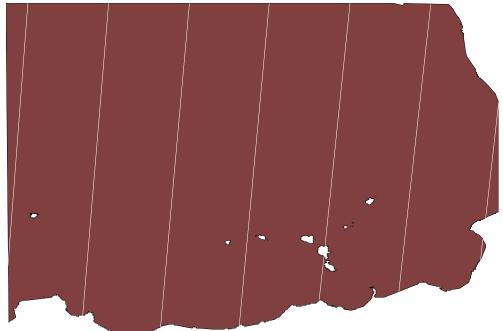
13.30776 39.99752



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Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 2
Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 6
List of samplers:
    x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
    15.47723 38.27763
    15.66918 39.9937
  Sampler 2
    14.98852 38.15279
    14.98889 38.15665
    14.98918 38.15954
    15.18048 39.99495
  Sampler 3
    14.50242 38.04186
    14.55019 38.56379
    14.55236 38.58696
    14.69151 39.99775
  Sampler 4
    14.02666 38.04222
    14.20201 39.99963
  Sampler 5
    13.55124 38.05276
13.71189 39.99936
  Sampler 6
    13.08227 38.16378
13.08255 38.16779
    13.08311 38.17577
13.2212 39.99694
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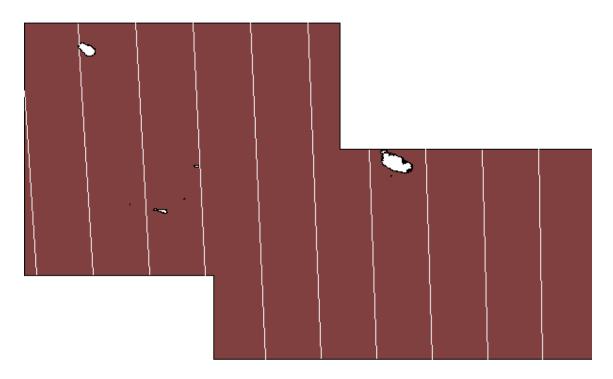
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Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 3
Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 6
List of samplers:
   x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
   15.67952 38.24784
    15.83609 39.62925
  Sampler 2
    15.19578 38.17209
    15.39097 39.99034
  Sampler 3
   14.7167 38.1396
   14.90256 39.99628
  Sampler 4
    14.22991 38.01733
    14.41334 39.99908
  Sampler 5
   13.75268 38.00006
    13.92348 39.99974
  Sampler 6
13.29241 38.21873
   13.43303 39.99825
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Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 4
Type of sampler: Line
Number of samplers: 7
List of samplers:
   x-coord y-coord
  Sampler 1
   15.88871 38.43923
    15.90247 38.56153
    15.917 38.68944
   15.99869 39.38795
  Sampler 2
   15.39097 38.24304
    15.58439 39.99395
  Sampler 3
    14.90957 38.19077
    14.93554 38.45758
   14.94182 38.52125
    15.0956 39.99511
  Sampler 4
    14.41964 38.03928
    14.6066 39.99823
  Sampler 5
    13.94294 38.02884
    14.11699 39.99973
  Sampler 6
    13.47206 38.0997
    13.62676 39.99909
  Sampler 7
   13.01553 38.39584
    13.13598 39.9963
```

Area E - Central-Southern Mediterranean Sea

Replica 1



Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 1

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 10

List of samplers:

x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

15.60554 34.33436

15.57477 36.00107

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Sampler 2

15.16814 34.33393

15.12789 36.00049

--

Sampler 3

14.73004 34.33499

14.68035 36.00095

--

Sampler 4

14.29125 34.3369

14.23219 36.00078

--

Sampler 5

13.85187 34.33716

13.74642 37.00193

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Sampler 6

13.41195 34.33578 13.29086 37.00399

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Sampler 7

12.93558 35.0004 12.83476 37.00424

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Sampler 8

12.49058 35.00215

12.37814 37.00267

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Sampler 9

12.04506 35.00221

11.93318 36.79797

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11.93143 36.82695

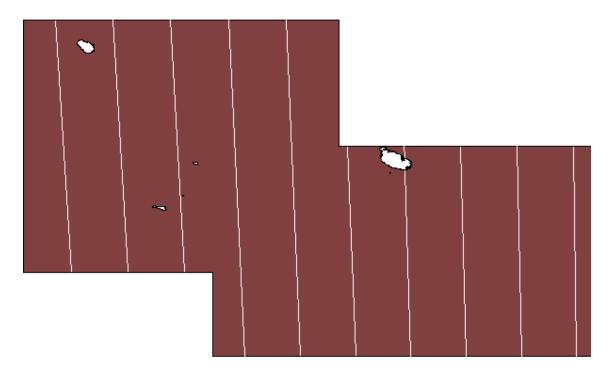
11.921 37.00014

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Sampler 10

11.59906 35.00059

11.49863 36.46776



Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 2

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 10

List of samplers: x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

15.88271 34.33377 15.85795 36.00054

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Sampler 2

15.4457 34.33439 15.41146 36.00106

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Sampler 3

15.00808 34.33337 14.96436 36.00015

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Sampler 4

14.56969 34.33588 14.52223 35.80754

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14.51996 35.88467

14.51989 35.88689

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14.51972 35.89294 14.51956 35.89835

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14.51956 35.89837 14.51949 35.90063 --14.51939 35.90412 14.51657 36.00109

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Sampler 5

14.13068 34.33718 14.0682 36.00028

--

Sampler 6

13.6911 34.33685 13.57994 37.0029

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Sampler 7

13.25098 34.33487 13.12418 37.00429

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Sampler 8

12.77295 35.00123 12.66788 37.00388

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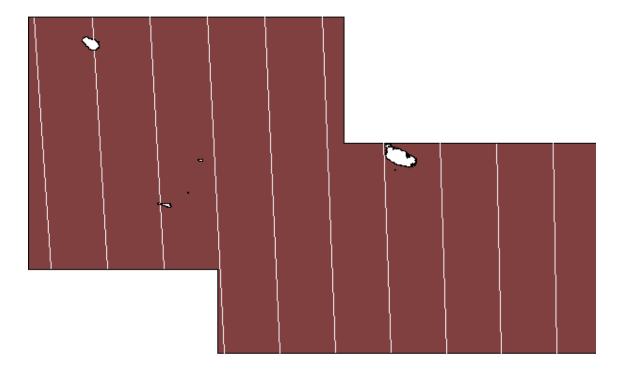
Sampler 9

12.32776 35.00237 12.21108 37.00164

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Sampler 10

11.88206 35.00182 11.75366 37.00027



Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 3

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 10

List of samplers: x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

15.68524 34.33426 15.6562 36.00099

--

Sampler 2

15.24795 34.33413 15.20943 36.00073

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Sampler 3

14.81 34.33447 14.76202 36.00079

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Sampler 4

14.37132 34.33667 14.31396 36.00094

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Sampler 5

13.93205 34.33724

13.82943 37.00136

--

Sampler 6

13.49222 34.33616

13.37398 37.00375
-Sampler 7
13.05186 34.33343
12.91798 37.00433
-Sampler 8

12.57177 35.00195 12.54275 35.51202

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12.54199 35.52551 12.46145 37.00309

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Sampler 9

12.12635 35.00233 12.02017 36.73443

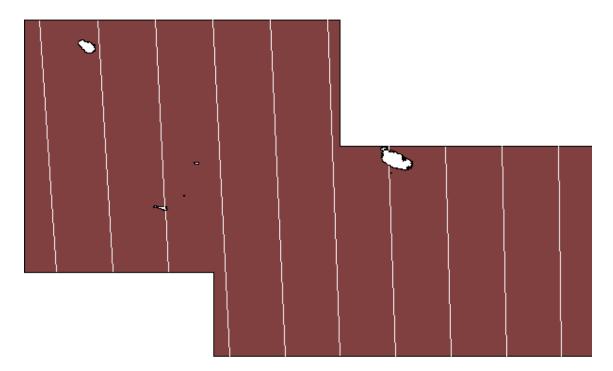
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12.01481 36.82475 12.00444 37.00004

--

Sampler 10

11.68043 35.00101 11.54667 37.0001



Sample layer name: 4 Replicas - Replica 4

Type of sampler: Line Number of samplers: 10

List of samplers:

x-coord y-coord

Sampler 1

15.75626 34.33412 15.72875 36.00087

Sampler 2

15.31907 34.33426 15.28209 36.00089

Sampler 3

14.88124 34.33395 14.83479 36.0006

Sampler 4

14.44266 34.33643

14.39164 35.84527

14.38848 35.94706

14.38836 35.95109

14.3878 35.96936

14.38683 36.00103

```
Sampler 5
 14.00348 34.33726
 13.9034 37.0008
Sampler 6
 13.56374 34.33644
13.44805 37.00348
Sampler 7
 13.12347 34.33399
 12.99213 37.00436
Sampler 8
 12.64412 35.00173
 12.6168 35.48963
 12.61528 35.51701
 12.53569 37.00342
Sampler 9
 12.19878 35.00238
12.07875 37.00066
```

Sampler 10

11.75294 35.00134 11.62111 37.0002